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ABSTRACT

This study is a political analysis of federal interagency policy processes in a diffusion project involving a national educational laboratory, a state department of education, and nine local districts. Data were collected through ethnohistorical procedures over one and one-half years for summative evaluation reports of the project and the curriculum. Diffusion was a discrepancy area, and lab autonomy occurred. State and local implementation of a curriculum developed by the federal agency led to dissension within the project. Project renewal negotiations, following unanticipated events, were for further exchange of services among federal, state, and local agencies operating on scarce resources. This study demonstrates successful federal policy strategies, which are presented as prescriptions and characterized as "realistic opportunism." (Author)

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ESEA INTERAGENCY POLICY-MAKING AS "REALISTIC OPPORTUNISM": A CASE STUDY OF A NATIONAL LABORATORY'S CURRICULUM DIFFUSION PROJECT

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ESEA INTERAGENCY POLICY-MAKING AS "REALISTIC OPPORTUNISM": A CASE STUDY OF A NATIONAL LABORATORY"S CURRICULUM DIFFUSION PROJECT

National educational policy-making processes in interagency projects is a timely topic to those concerned with educational change in America. The increasing activity by the federal government in education is a reality of the 1970's. The implementation of national policies through interagency projects lacks comprehensive analysis.[1/] This case study focuses on federal interagency policy-making in a curriculum diffusion project involving a national educational laboratory, a state department of education, and nine local school districts.

This paper is based on a comprehensive analysis of federal policy-making in a planned interagency project. The federal curriculum was to be diffused to all districts in one state within five years. The larger study[2/] demonstrates the complexities of federa' interagency policy-making. These complexities were related to the uncertainty of OE policies and funding; the separate clients served by each agency; the different constituencies and officials which influenced each agency's scare resources; and agency investments in existing programs, personnel, and facilities. State and local adoption of a federal curriculum led to dissension which was contained within the project.

Scope and Purpose

Federal interagency policy-making is described and analyzed in the context of laboratory program development from 1967 to 1972. The Aesthetic Education Program (hereafter AEP) was established at a midwestern R and D laboratory in 1967. The process of curriculum development was 1) a detailed review of research in the separate arts disciplines from 1967 to 1969; 2) the development and formative evaluation of 10 of the planned 40 curriculum packages from 1968 to 1972; and 3) summative evaluation of the curriculum in schools from 1971 to

1973. The laboratory established an interagency project in 1971 to acquire extended pilot sites for summative evaluation.

Federal policy-making can be described after the fact. Yet, the analysis, by definition, imposes an order which rarely existed for the participants. Policy-making was neither completely rational or irrational. As argued in this paper, federal policy-making was an interplay of opportunism, realistic assessment, and intuition. Laboratory procedures as described herein cannot be generalized as a model for other agencies. However, an analysis may enable officials in interagency projects to understand and anticipate difficulties.

Ethnohistorical Methodology and Procedures

Ethnohistorical field research is a combination of two research methodologies, history and ethnography. Ethnohistorical field research through non-interfering observation procedures focused on the participant's actions in their natural setting and explicitly used oral and recorded history to provide a more complete explanation of the observed processes.[3/] Laboratory program development and the interagency project were studied in the context of national educational policies for additional insights.

The Investigator was an Evaluation Associate at the national educational laboratory from July, 1971, through February, 1973. An Evaluation Specialist and the Investigator were assigned to describe, analyze and evaluate the Extended Pilot Trials of the Aesthetic Education Program in the interagency project. The primary sources were documents and field notes. Records of on-the-site observations at the federal, state, and local agencies were made. The evaluators spent a total of 45 days in Pennsylvania during the 1971-72 school year. They attended several state conferences and averaged four visits per district. Ethnographic observations were made of four national three-day conferences held at the laboratory. Numerous informal situations in Pennsylvania and at the federal agency

were information-collecting occasions. The field records consisted of several thousand pages of observations made by both evaluators.

Documents were official and unofficial records collected at the national, state, and local agencies or mentioned by the participants. Documents included 1) the official and "working papers" of each agency; 2) newspaper articles and press releases; 3) P.T.A., Christmas and spring school programs; 4) pupil papers and tests, teacher and administrative informal notes; 5) the curriculum materials; 6) official purchase orders for the curriculum; and 7) federal laws.

Discrepancies In National Policies For Curriculum Diffusion

The ESEA Act was a major change in federal educational policy for elementary and secondary schools. The passage of the law was similar to other significant federal legislation in labor relations, social security, race relations, etc. The intellectual and political evolution of federal educational policy can be traced in the proposals by various groups before 1965. To pass the law required several Congressional sessions and forming a coalition of educational interest groups. Agreement on the intent of federal educational policy was reached through concensus over time. Agreement on the legal structure required negotiation and compromise.[4/] The law was not internally consistent and contained discrepancies. If these discrepancies were recognized in 1965, they remained unresolved. Perhaps the educational interest groups expected OE to provide solutions.

The ESEA Act mandated a new federal mission in education: to promote "actions leading to qualitative changes in American education."[5/] The intent was to change the nation's educational practices. The law created new agencies and redistributed the powers among existing federal, state, and local institutions. Existing agencies were OE, state departments of education, and school districts. Title IV established two new agencies: R and D centers and regional R and D educational laboratories. The procedure for changing educational practices was the allocation

of federal funds for program development. OE implemented federal educational policy through directives, program review, and the awarding of federal contracts.

The ESEA legal structure appeared sufficient for the task of promoting "qualitative changes in American education." Program development was encouraged at federal, state, and local levels. Program justification could be based on the needs of educationally disadvantaged children, identified local needs for educational innovations and special services, and identified state and federal educational needs. The law provides internal checks and balances between multiple agencies and OE program review. OE used systems and cost-analyses, PERT linear sequencing schemes, and statistical evaluation procedures for assessing accountability. The official language of the educational community was highly rational and non-political. The actions of educational agencies to implement the law were quite different.

Curriculum diffusion, the focus of this study, was a discrepancy area between the intent of the ESEA Act, the legal structure, and OE directives in program development and allocation of federal funds. First, there was no legislative provision for the diffusion of a national curriculum to some 50 state departments, over 18,000 school districts and other educational institutions. Second, OE strictly interpreted the law and did not officially allocate monies for diffusion. Monies were allocated only for research, curriculum development, and dissemination. Third, a laboratory did not have, nor was intended to have, the facilities for mass production of a curriculum. OE did not develop a policy clarifying either the copyright status of federal curriculums nor publication procedures. In fact, OE allocated monies to those programs fulfilling their educational mission without providing policies to resolve diffusion discrepancies. The significance is obvious when 11 of the 20 R and D laboratories were phased out from 1967 and 1971 by OE. In the context of these discrepancies and increasing competition

for federal contracts, the laboratory moved toward autonomy to fulfill its educational mission.

Perhaps the field notes best summarize these problems from the laboratory's viewpoint.

> The laboratory official said, "As a laboratory, we are not financed by OE to mass produce materials. Yet, we had to have commercial copies for Extended Pilot Trials. Therefore, we turned to a publishing company and made a 'manufacturing' contract. When it gets beyond this type of arrangement, then it's regular publication. We then requested bids with an eight-year developmental copyright. OE never saw something like this being produced by a lab program nor thought about diffusion. These decisions should have been foreseen five years ago and they are now being faced by labs trying to diffuse curriculums."
>
> (OBS: As the Diffusion Director said last month, OE has never financed diffusion activities. The lab had to obtain a publishing company since the federal government was not going to finance it.) 11/11[6]

Federal Interagency Policy-Making In The Context of Laboratory Program Development

The diffusion project demonstrated successful federal interagency policy-making. The project enabled AEP to obtain a three-year federal contract and eventually find a curriculum publisher. This was no slight accomplishment. Only five of the remaining nine R and D laboratories were awarded three-year contracts for the 1973-76 fiscal years. Federal processes are outlined below and followed by a more detailed explanation.

1. The laboratory studied the influential federal officials and their constituencies which influenced and/or controlled the agency's resources.

2. The laboratory gained a broad understanding of the ESEA five-year mission for Title IV agencies to generally anticipate when problems in program development must be resolved.

3. The laboratory sought and developed opportunities to acquire more resources to carry out their educational mission through other agencies, associations, foundations and groups.

4. The laboratory offered interagency project benefits which would enhance all participating agencies.

5. The laboratory negotiated an exchange of services and costs among the project agencies to insure federal benefits.

6. The laboratory implemented the project by delivering promised services, monitoring federal investments, and revising procedures when unanticipated events occurred.

7. The laboratory simultaneously conducted other diffusion strategies and periodically compared benefits derived from different strategies. Benefits were assessed in terms of aiding AEP to achieve its national mission.

8. The laboratory[7/] annually re-negotiated interagency policies to increase federal benefits.

These processes were not stages in the sense that one was completed before initiating the next. There was order and logic in the evolution of these processes but this was recognized by the participants as hindsight. These processes were more experientially-based ones of try-out, follow through, feedback, and revision. The total process was not rationally planned. Procedures were pragmatic and expedient. In reality, procedures were an uneasy balance between the laboratory's educational mission and the restraints imposed by federal policies. Thus, federal interagency policy-making is characterized as realistic opportunism.[8/]

The laboratory studied influential federal officials and their constituencies. As a federal agency, the laboratory's resources were determined by Congressional funding and OE contract awards. Policy-makers were changing officials who acquired office by election or appointment, and collectively represented a national constituency. However, the national constituency was divided on educational issues and priorities.

The laboratory study of the federal system included a general knowledge of the intent of ESEA, its legal structure, and OE's institutional structure. This provided information about the rhythm of institutional processes such as when Basic Program Plans were submitted and federal contract decisions were made. Once this knowledge was acquired, the laboratory continually studied who

influenced policies for Title IV agencies. This required following the changing Washington scene and anticipating proposals which might become federal law or OE policy. It required periodic personal contact and visits to Washington, D.C., pooling of information from multiple sources, estimating the implications of national political and educational trends, and gauging the competition among Title IV agencies.

This laboratory had an advantage because key officials were already familiar with Washington politics from previous OE positions held in the early 1960's. However, because of the fluxuating nature of educational politics at the U.S. capital, the laboratory carefully monitored national trends. The early 1960's was the heyday for the arts and education under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. The trends from 1967 to 1972 indicated increased competition to maintain federal educational programs. Inflation and the Vietnam war became more important than changing educational practices.

Second, the laboratory had a broad understanding of ESEA public policy goals[2/] and the five-year mission of the Title IV agencies. The staff could generally anticipate when problems in program development must be resolved. Since the beginning, the AEP staff believed the curriculum would be developed and nationally diffused by 1972, but the means - the how's, when's, and where's - were uncertain. The staff would anticipate problems, but this differed from defining a "problem" to be resolved. In the process of seeking and developing opportunities, problems were identified and resolved. Which problems became top priority were determined by external pressures on the laboratory.

The laboratory initiated the interagency project a year early in anticipation of stiff competition for federal contracts. The project was operating months before OE officially announced funding contracts for 1973 to 1976 would be awarded for one, two, or three years. The laboratory's problem became how to obtain a

three year contract to complete its mission. Originally the project was to establish extended pilot sites for summative evaluation of the curriculum. Political wisdom had dictated combining evaluation with a state diffusion plan. During the first project year, diffusion benefits became more important than those obtained from curriculum evaluation.[10/]

Third, since 1967, the laboratory sought opportunities to carry out their mission through other agencies, associations, foundations, and groups. As a new educational agency, the laboratory had several disadvantages. One was the lack of credibility among established educational institutions. Although ESEA legitimized the laboratory's existence, other means were used to establish credibility. AEP used two procedures. They appointed university arts educators as national advisory committee members and staff associates. Curriculum development was more a trial-and-error process than one logically derived from arts research.[11/] However, the use of research in curriculum evaluation became a second procedure to establish credibility.

A second disadvantage of the new agency was the image of an unstable institution. Laboratory life was directly influenced by changing federal policies and competition for annual funding. The lab was composed of a variety of specialists, each with his own sources of official policy and informal contacts with different federal agencies. Contradictory whispers and speculations of federal policy echoed as lab rumors and only much later were some translated into federal policy statements and the technical jargon of systems analysis and cost-accounting. OE directives were responses to specific problems, open to interpretation, and often inconsistent. From the lab's perspective, one never knew when activities must be labeled differently to fit the latest federal fad. For beneath the surface, was competition between labs to maintain programs. As the laboratory Vice President said, "OE owns us!"

By late spring of 1972, several federal policies had changed. The movement for establishing a National Institute of Education (NIE) foreshadowed uncertainty for laboratories. NIE would eventually administer federal educational programs following this transitional period. Program contracts would be awarded for one, two, and three years. The laboratory Vice-President characterized this transitional period as "directionaless." He said "During the last 12 months the laboratories have been directionaless. This will continue for the next 18 months. There is no Director of laboratories at OE and no one is making policy."

A third disadvantage was the lack of established relationships with other educational institutions. Coalition building by the laboratory began before a single package was developed. The planned curriculum, an integrated multi-arts approach to aesthetic education, interested professionals in separate arts disciplines such as music, dance, visual arts, literature, drama and film. The federal agency involved representatives of these diverse groups in program development. Mass communication through newsletters and large audience dissemination merely supplemented personal contact. The laboratory co-published collections of aesthetic education articles with arts associations and presented programs at national conferences. The federal agency gave liberal recognition to individuals and their institutions in official documents. In the process of seeking opportunities and sharing benefits, a national coalition developed. By 1971, the laboratory had aesthetic education lobbyists[12/] in two foundations, all major national associations of the separate arts disciplines, 50 to 70 universities, and a number of state departments of education.

Over the years, the laboratory contacted aesthetic education lobbyists about "openings" and opportunities to achieve their educational mission. A summary observation of an informal conversation describes this aspect.

> The AEP staff was eating breakfast together before the teacher workshop when someone asked "Why Pennsylvania?" A staff member said, "Our Director always goes where he knows people. It's

> very simple. You always go where you know there is an opening. He knew the opening was in basic education - not in fine arts."
>
> (OBS: The diffusion opening was through general education programs with the state department and not through university departments of art education or fine arts.) 5/17

Through continuous personal contact, laboratory officials were aware of problems in other institutions. These problems were often clues to suggest cooperative approaches. The field notes capture an example in federal-state negotiations.

> They tried out ideas on each other - rejecting some, revising others, and compromising.... I got the impression that each was trying to help out the other; to pull together what they knew of both problems to see if they could not improve the situation. 5/23

Cooperative approaches were formalized only after personal investigation.

Fourth, the laboratory offered interagency project benefits which could enhance state and local agencies. This was decided after both the AEP Director and state department lobbyist were satisfied that an opportunity existed in Pennsylvania. The negotiations which followed were not for persuading state officials with AEP ideology, e.g., the value of aesthetic education for all children and the American society. The state lobbyist and Commissioner were already committed to aesthetic education goals. The problem became whether the opportunity could be developed to benefit both federal and state agencies. As the AEP Director said, "This...is typical of the way you get things done. Every group has its own conflict situation and it's tied up in its own internal politics. The only way to do it is to negotiate and bargain to exchange favors to make it work." Federal and state officials planned benefits which the state department would offer to nine local districts to obtain their cooperation.

Each agency sought additional benefits by using the project for multiple purposes. The field notes described this aspect in interagency negotiations.

> No one speaks of public policy goals, educational missions, or AEP ideologies. It is all very practical, realistic problem-solving...

> establishing the priority of the goals, long-term and short-term, and the choice of the most effective procedures under the present conditions. 5/23

Thus the federal agency would acquire sites for summative evaluation, a state market for the curriculum, and a demonstration of its completed national mission on a state scale. The state department would benefit by fulfilling a Governor's platform, extending the state Quality Educational Program, and developing new teacher education programs. Local districts would receive a cost-free curriculum, prestige from the state and federal project, and other benefits.

INSERT FIGURE 1

ABOUT HERE

Once assured that institutional benefits could be realized through an interagency project, the project goals were formalized. Project goals were stated in the official state department plan made public in January of 1971.[13/] The five-year project was to accomplish 1) state diffusion of the federal curriculum, 2) district-wide diffusion of the curriculum, 3) regional in-service and pre-service teacher education programs, and 4) summative evaluation of the curriculum. In essence, the federal curriculum would be diffused to some 500 districts in the state and all elementary schools would develop aesthetic education programs.

Fifth, the laboratory negotiated an exchange of services and costs among the project agencies to insure federal benefits. The project became more clearly defined during these negotiations. Briefly, the laboratory agreed to provide the curriculum, project orientation conferences, evaluation, and coordination of the project. The state department would disseminate information, supervise local aesthetic education program development, and aid districts in purchasing

National Agency	State Agency	Local Agencies
1. Sites for summative evaluation	1. Fulfillment of Governor's Platform	1. Cost-free curriculum
2. Potential market for curriculum	2. Extension of state Quality Education Program	2. Prestige from state and federal project
3. Demonstration of completion of national mission on a state scale	3. New teacher education programs	3. Extension of district's long-range goal and plans
		4. Staff development
		5. Implementation information for ease of diffusion

Figure 1: PLANNED BENEFITS FROM FEDERAL INTERAGENCY PROJECT

the curriculum through Title III monies. The local districts would develop aesthetic education programs, serve as demonstration sites to potential adopters, and diffuse the curriculum to other district schools. All agencies assumed the costs of providing project services, but federal services could be demonstrated with cost accounting figures.

INSERT FIGURE 2

ABOUT HERE

Initiating the project a year early created a problem for the laboratory - how to obtain multiple copies of packages not yet completed. The laboratory located a company to mass produce the packages after the project was publicly announced. Although only nine sets of packages were needed for the project, the company manufactured 500 sets to make a profit. In return for federal editorial control over the curriculum, the laboratory guaranteed the purchase of all 500 sets of packages. Because the federal agency kept editorial control and would diffuse the curriculum, they viewed this as a "manufacturing" contract and not a publishing contract. The laboratory then presented OE with the accomplished fact. Laboratory officials knew OE well enough to consider such action as a reasonable risk.

The laboratory tried to insure federal benefits from the project with extra-legal documents. While the state department plan was a general document for public consumption, the federal Memorandums of Understandings[14/] were policy statements signed by the chief executive officer of the federal, state, and local agencies. The Memorandums specified each agency's project services and costs. State and local services were to encourage curriculum diffusion. The Memorandums also stated three areas of supreme federal authority: evaluation, usage of the curriculum for aesthetic education program development at the site,

	National Agency	State Agency	Local Agencies
Planned Services for the Project	1. Develop the curriculum	1. State coordinating office for dissemination and diffusion	1. AEP program development at pilot site
	2. Conduct orientation conferences and teacher workshops	2. State endorsement of all project conferences and activities	2. District diffusion of AEP
	3. Residential Project Coordinator	3. Supervision of district program development and demonstration	3. Pilot site for federal evaluation
	4. Evaluate the curriculum and project	4. Resource for teacher education program development	4. Demonstration site for state diffusion
		5. Aid districts in purchase of curriculum	5. Attendance at project conferences and workshops
Planned Agency Costs	1. Delivery of 10 cost-free packages to the 9 districts	1. Personnel time for: a) state coordination b) district supervision c) coordination of teacher education courses d) negotiating federal funds for AEP projects e) attendance at project conferences and workshops	1. Personnel time for: a) district coordination b) supervision of pilot teachers c) school program development
	2. Salary and expenses of Project Coordinator		2. Classroom time to use AEP; adjusting educational priorities
	3. Salary and expenses of Evaluators	2. Travel expenses for the above policy-making decisions	3. Purchase curriculum for diffusion
	4. Expenses of organizing and conducting two orientation conferences and three teacher workshops		

Figure 2: PLANNED INTERAGENCY EXCHANGE OF PROJECT SERVICES AND COSTS

and federal copyright claims on all packages. The project would be renewed annually by all agencies. In the vacuum of OE diffusion policy, the federal agency sought to insure its benefits with ad hoc agreements. However, state and local compliance did not depend on formal agreements but the benefits each agency could acquire from the project.

Sixth, the laboratory provided the promised services for the project. As the AEP Director said, "Once we come off as a federal shoe salesman, we'll get kicked out. We do provide the services we promise." Three of the four federal services occurred as planned: project orientation conferences, evaluation, and coordination. Although the curriculum was not delivered as scheduled, this was unintended. Under the circumstances, the delayed, staggered, and incomplete delivery of the curriculum seemed unavoidable.[15/] Five packages had been scheduled for delivery in September and five more in January. Two packages were delivered in fall and three more arrived in spring. The next five packages were re-scheduled for delivery in September.

Seventh, the laboratory simultaneously conducted other diffusion strategies and periodically compared benefits derived from different strategies. Alternate strategies were expedient ways of resolving unanticipated problems. For example, the laboratory had guaranteed the purchase of the 500 sets of packages. At the time the project began in the Pennsylvania schools, an AEP staff member established extended pilot sites outside of Pennsylvania. Unlike those sites in the inter-agency project, these districts purchased sets of packages in return for pre-publication prices and the prestige associated with a national program. By January, 1972, AEP had 20 extended pilot sites in 10 midwestern states.[16/]

Another strategy developed in resolving the problem of obtaining a curriculum publisher. The laboratory conducted a fruitless search for a publisher in the fall of 1971. Publishing companies considered the proposed federal contract too risky a business venture. The laboratory offered an eight year "developmental

copyright," an AEP interpretation of the copyright laws.[17/] Some companies were interested only if a national market existed for a multi-arts curriculum. As the AEP Director told his staff, "We have to establish and maintain our own market" to attract a publisher. Of the four laboratory curriculums, AEP had the only one in manufactured form. Lab officials thought AEP had the best chance to obtain a three-year funding contract. They decided to gamble on one program. The Diffusion Division changed its policy from one of providing educational services for the midwestern region to diffusing one curriculum throughout the nation. The remaining sets of manufactured packages were used to demonstrate a national market existed. By May, 1972, over 200 sets of packages had been purchased by extended pilot sites in 26 states.[18/] In addition, the laboratory had seven formal arrangements and 21 informal arrangements with other state departments.

Benefits from the project were periodically compared to benefits derived from other strategies. Different staff members were assigned to developing opportunities, monitoring the federal investments, and assessing the benefits. Documented evidence was necessary. The federal Project Coordinator gathered information about the plans and actions of the other project agencies. The Diffusion Division recorded purchase orders sent in by its staff.

Finally, the laboratory assessed the project in terms of achieving its national mission. The project was becoming a problem for several reasons. The project only operated in one state and the Title IV mandate was for the nation. Second, if the laboratory continued its present rate of investment in the project, the project would become a financial liability. The AEP Basic Program Plan submitted to OE for 1973-76 proposed monies be allocated to complete the curriculum and continue national diffusion through a cost-sharing arrangement with districts.[19/] Third, unanticipated events indicated a state market for the curriculum would not develop the first project year. Federal officials estimated early the consequences of the delayed curriculum delivery. Months later these consequences became

apparent as districts did not develop aesthetic education programs and postponed demonstration to potential adopters. Federal fears were confirmed when districts did not purchase the curriculum. The Pennsylvania opportunity was lost. The most that could be recouperated was diffusion through state intervention with a Title III Aesthetic Education project.

Eighth, the laboratory renegotiated interagency policies to resolve federal problems. Federal officials obtained maximum funding for the state Title III project which would diffuse the curriculum to 18 new districts.[20/] Documented evidence gave the federal position several advantages in interagency negotiations. The federal officials could raise issues directly such as asking state officials "Where is your support?" The AEP Director could estimate the total federal investment in the project and buttress his demands by comparing strategies. As he said, "Pennsylvania is a good opportunity but it is expensive - $100,000.... It was the highest cost of any state and we need our pay-off. We invested one-tenth the amount in Kentucky and we have just as many sites. Other state departments are interested....If the Pennsylvania state department does not want to continue the project, there are other states that could be developed....What is happening here is unique. Other states buy packages."

Federal officials wanted to withdraw from the project. Official plans envisioned project leadership eventually passing to state and local agencies. The laboratory made concessions in return for arrangements to withdraw from the project after the second year. Federal concessions were recognition of state and local supreme jurisdiction in program development and curriculum purchase. Aesthetic education program development and evaluation in Pennsylvania were no longer as important as national diffusion. National diffusion was essential to obtain a three-year OE contract and a curriculum publisher.

The project continued with minimal federal services because state and local agencies realized unanticipated benefits. State and local lobbyists used the

project to resolve unexpected internal and/or external problems. Unanticipated benefits were more related to maintaining and enhancing the agencies than to official project goals. State officials used the project to reorganize the state department and extend the Commissioner's influence to other Bureaus. Districts used the packages to supplement the existing educational programs, especially in language arts. A few districts used the project to exchange favors with the state department for locally initiated Title III projects. Thus the project continued, not to carry out federal policy per se, but to maintain and enhance state and local institutions.

Yet the federal project influenced some changes in state and local policies and educational practices. State and local agencies officially adopted the federal curriculum for instructional purposes. Instructional priorities shifted when teachers used the curriculum. All participants recognized pupils learned something important. Pupils enjoyed the packages and became involved in lengthy learning activities.

Federal Interagency Policy-Making As 'Realistic Opportunism'

Federal interagency policy-making resembled realistic opportunism more than executing a comprehensive policy. Opportunities did not occur by chance but were possibilities deliberately sought and developed. Building a national coalition and making formal interagency alliances became procedures for seeking and developing opportunities. OE allocated monies for only research, curriculum development and dissemination. The extended pilot trials, as the last stage in curriculum development, became diffusion opportunities.

Developing diffusion opportunities involved a gamble. Policies were made with incomplete information and were often based on intuition. There was neither time nor resources to investigate carefully all opportunities. Opportunities were not viewed as permanent solutions to diffusion problems, but merely the best

solution among the known choices at the time. The laboratory could not control federal policy-makers, national trends, nor the market. Conditions external to the laboratory often determine whether an opportunity became a winner or a loser.

In the process of developing opportunities, laboratory autonomy occurred. Diffusion was a discrepancy area in federal policies. The laboratory signed a "manufacturing" contract, used extended pilot trials for diffusion, and offered an eight-year "developmental copyright" to publishers. In the tide of events, the laboratory seized opportunities, resolved unexpected problems, and then informed OE. Presented with the accomplished fact and an expanding national coalition, OE had little choice but to sanction laboratory policies.

Opportunities were developed with procedures to minimize risks. Staff members were assigned to monitor, document, and assess strategies. The federal agency made provisions for withdrawing from long-term investments. The renewal of the interagency project depended on prior satisfactory performance of the agencies and the "availability of funds." The uncertainty of annual federal funding haunted all laboratory policy-making.

Finally, the survival of the federal agency depended upon early recognition of a poor investment and taking action. The diffusion rate in the interagency project was low compared to other states. Other diffusion opportunities looked more promising. The federal agency negotiated to withdraw from the project.

Federal policy-making processes were complex for several reasons. Different opportunities were being developed simultaneously. A single opportunity became top priority until policies were made. Other opportunities, temporarily ignored, were then attended. Unattended opportunities did not remain constant. Unable to control external influences, the course of federal policies was erratic.

Within the project, federal policies were cognizant of each agency's competition for scarce resources. Federal, state, and local agencies had external publics which controlled their resources. Each agency sought means to obtain

more resources, but the only available means was through influence. Each agency competed with similar agencies for public funds. All agencies diversified their resources. Both state and local agencies competed for ESEA monies. All agencies sought volunteer services from service groups and grants from private foundations. However, the primary resources were those from the public sector of the economy. In essence, the federal, state, and local political milieu was one of competition for scarce public monies. The offering of interagency project benefits recognized this reality.

The public nature of the state and local agencies influenced federal interagency policy-making. Federal, state, and local agencies had interdependent but different clients and constituencies. The ultimate client for all educational agencies was school-aged children. Each agency's mission of program development was justified by the educational needs of children. However, the immediate clients for federal, state, and local agencies differed. The federal agency served state departments; the state departments served local districts; the districts served the pupils. National, state and local constituencies also differed except in one respect. Constituencies were usually fragmented groups. Regardless of the similarity in educational missions, each agency responded to different constituencies and offered different educational services to their immediate clients. To organize and implement a cooperative effort among federal, state, and local agencies not only required the delivery of project services, but also coordination, follow-through, and revision.

In addition, each participating agency had its own institutional structure, "internal politics," and investments. These investments were in the personnel, the informal influence mechanisms to resolve internal dissension, and the existing programs, materials, and facilities. Regardless of the similarities among institutions, the process of policy-making differed within each agency.

Official adoption of a federal curriculum and implementation of the project caused disruption within state and local agencies and led to interagency dissension. An integrated multi-arts curriculum for elementary teachers could arouse opposition from local art and music specialists and their state associations.[21] These districts could not justify purchasing the curriculum when aesthetic education was not considered essential by their communities. Federal recognition of state and local supreme jurisdiction in program development and curriculum purchase contained interagency dissension within the project.

Because of these complexities, federal interagency policy-making was unpredictable. Unable to control policy consequences, federal officials monitored, realistically assessed and revised procedures. Operating under these conditions to achieve a national educational mission, federal policy-making was opportunistic.

FOOTNOTES

1/ Separate agencies have been studied but none have focused on interagency policy. For example, see Stephen Bailey and Edith Mosher, ESEA: The Office of Education Administers a Law; Philip Meranto, The Politics of Federal Aid to Education in 1965: A Study of State Aid to Education in the Northeast; N. Masters, R. Salisbury and T. Eliot, State Politics and and the Public Schools: An Exploratory Analysis; R. Kimbrough, Political Power and Educational Decision-making; D. Rogers, 110 Livingston Street: Politics and Bureaucracy in the New York City School System.

2/ S. Schumacher, A Case Study of National Policy-Making in an Interagency Curriculum Diffusion Project. (Unpublished dissertation, Washington University, 1974.) The Investigator's decision to use a political analysis occurred only after major attempts were made to use concepts from diffusion, research and knowledge development, and organizational theory. See L. M. Smith and S. Schumacher, Extended Pilot Trials of the Aesthetic Education Program: A Qualitative Description, Analysis and Evaluation; (St. Ann, Mo.: CEMREL, Inc., 1972) and S. Schumacher, Limitations of a Research, Development, and Diffusion (RD and D) Strategy in Diffusion: A Case Study of Nine Local Implementations of a State-Adopted Curriculum. A Paper presented to the College and University Faculty Association of NCSS, Boston, Nov., 1972; (ERIC SO 005 632)

3/ The methodology is a combination of approaches suggested by L. Gottschalk, Understanding History, Chp. 5, 6, 7; J. Barzun and T. Graff, The Modern Researcher, Chp. 2, 3, 4; R. Stover, The Nature of Historical Thinking; P. Gardiner, The Nature of Historical Explanation; B. G. Glaser and A. L. Strauss, The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research; S. Bruyn, The Human Perspective in Sociology; P. Pelto, Anthropological Research: The Structure of Inquiry; and L. M. Smith and P. Pohland, "Education, Technology, and the Rural Highlands" in D. Sjorgen, (ed.), AERA Evaluation Monograph Series, No. 8 (in press).

4/ P. Meranto, S. Bailey and E. Mosher, op. cit.

5/ U.S. Congress, House Committee on Education and Labor. Study of the United States Office of Education. H. Doc. 193, 90th Cong., 1st sess., 1967, p. 23.

6/ The Investigator has done minor editing of the field notes for purposes of confidentiality and clarification. Quotations indicate verbatium statements recorded when the Investigator was in the role of complete observer.

7/ The term "laboratory" is used in this paper even though a more accurate word would be "program." Laboratory is used because state and local officials did not discriminate between the AEP program and the laboratory and because ultimately the laboratory took the responsibility for all policy.

8/ For a more problem-solving approach, see Charles Lindblom, Strategies for Decision-Making: University of Illinois Bulletin, (Urbana, Ill., University of Illinois, 1971) and "The Science of Muddling Through" in Fred Carver and Thomas J. Sergiovanni (eds.), Organizations and Human Behavior: Focus on Schools. For a more opportunistic approach in business organizations, see Peter Drucker, Managing for Results: Economic Tasks and Risk-taking Decisions. See R. Salisbury, Interest Group Politics in America for an application of exchange theory to interest group formation.

9/ Public policy goals do not connote partisanship but are those goals justified for the betterment of society. See H. Berlak, "Values Goals, Public Policy, and Educational Evaluation," Review of Educational Research, XL (April, 1970), 261-278.

10/ Summative evaluation sites could have been obtained in a nearby metropolitan area.

11/ Although extensive research was done, the Guidelines for Curriculum Development in Aesthetic Education (1970) did not present a single definition of aesthetic education, an acceptable theoretical framework, nor a consistent philosophical basis for curriculum decision-making. Thus, the major decision-maker was the individual curriculum writer with staff reviews. The staff writers were trained in an arts discipline and not general educators with extensive classroom experience. The packages contained implicit assumptions about the elementary child, the classroom teacher, school facilities, the community resources and educational mores. These assumptions became more explicit in summative evaluation.

12/ A lobbyist collected resources and infused others with aesthetic education goals and ideology. Some lobbyists were personally committed to the value of aesthetic education for all children. Other lobbyists saw the program as a procedure to initiate change.

13/ A Department of Education Plan for the Establishment of a Pilot Aesthetic Education Program in Cooperation with Selected Schools, CEMREL, and other Interested Agencies. Pennsylvania Department of Education, January, 1971.

14/ Memorandums of Understandings, 1971. There was no legal recourse for the federal agency to enforce these agreements.

15/ See S. Schumacher (1974), Chp. 3 and 4.

16/ AEP Purchase Orders. Filed with Diffusion Division, June 21, 1971 (first order) to December, 1972.

17/ The eight-year "developmental copyright" interpretation was based on the Ad Interim copyright. This provided a five-year copyright protection for books in English which were first published outside of U.S. See Harriet Pilpet and Morton Goldberg, A Copyright Guide, pp. 16-17. The original OE funding for AEP was a five-year contract through 1973. AEP assumed they would be awarded a three-year contract through 1976. A five-year Ad Interim copyright would protect the publisher until 1981. But, AEP had in 1971 packages which could be nationally marketed and offered a "developmental" copyright. Thus while the remaining 30 packages were being developed, the first 10 could be marketed.

18/ AEP Purchase Orders.

19/ Basic Program Plan: Aesthetic Education Program, (April 1, 1972), pp. 111-113, 120-24, and Appendix-9, pp. 198-201

20/ Aesthetic Education Program, Phase II, Title III ESEA, August 4, 1972.

21/ The state lobbyist characterized the 8,000 to 9,000 arts specialists in Pennsylvania as a "well-entrenched establishment." A project which provided an arts curriculum to elementary teachers instead of the specialists upset the traditional instructional roles of specialists and teachers.

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